

Application No.: 09/869,660

Docket No.: N7419.0028

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 22 are in the case. Claims 1 to 6 were canceled without prejudice. Claim 7 was amended to advance the allowance of the subject application. Claims 11 and 13 were withdrawn from consideration. Favorable reconsideration of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is hereby respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 6 were rejected as allegedly being anticipated by or, in the alternative, as obvious over Sybert et al., Nakano, Brown et al., European Patent Nos. 546,497 and 451,563; Okabe et al. or Vianello et al. for reasons set forth on pages 2 and 3 of the Office action. In response, applicants respectfully submit that the subject rejection is moot in view of the above claim amendment.

Claims 7-10, 12, 14, and 15 were objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claim 1, but were indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, applicants amended claim 7 as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, applicants respectfully submit the subject objection is believed to be overcome.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

Finally, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner consider the May 15 Information Disclosure Statement prior to the next Office action and return a copy of the initialed PTO Form 1449 to the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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